



AMERICAN CANOE ASSOCIATION WHITEWATER KAYAK

Course Description

PURPOSE - The ACA Whitewater Kayak Course is a program emphasizing safety, enjoyment and skill acquisition for entry-level through intermediate individuals in public, private and commercial settings.

Prerequisites: None

The **REQUIRED** information is required for all courses. All other information should be considered optional and included to best fit the students, class locations, and time allowed. This is not a syllabus! Sample syllabuses are available on the ACA website.

Whitewater

Flatwater and up to Class II whitewater
16 hours (Instructors may adjust the course at their discretion.)

Successive Courses:

Advanced Whitewater

COURSE CONTENT

Course Orientation and logistics (REQUIRED)

Welcome
Introduction of instructors and participants
Overview with expectations & limitations
Waiver/Assumption of Risk/Medical Form
Site specific procedures, regulations, times
WARM UP and Stretching to reduce injury
ACA Safety Packet (AWA revised safety code)
Hypothermia
Alcohol/Chemical Substance abuse
Group Responsibilities/ No peer pressure

Equipment

Kayak: types, materials, flotation, parts (including safety features: walls, foot braces, grab loops)
Kayak outfitting: comfort & safety; back rests, hip pads
Paddle: types, parts, length, blade size & shape, fitting, hand position
Spray skirts: types & material, grab loop!
Care of equipment
Personal Equipment: water, food, shoes, sunscreen, bug spray, sun glasses, eyeglass straps, protective clothing for heat or cold, sponge, hat, foot protection, food, bailer, whistle
Car topping: Loading and unloading, racks, tie down

(REQUIRED EQUIPMENT TOPICS)

Life jackets (PFDs): types, fit
Helmet: types, fit

Water Comfort (REQUIRED)

Launching, carries, landing
Water confidence and comfort

Wet exits
How to empty a kayak

Rescue Priorities: People, gear, & boats

The Terminology of Paddling

(Frequently blended in with stroke instruction)
Types of strokes: power, turning & bracing
Stroke components: catch, propulsion, recovery, control and correction
Effective Body Usage and Bio-Kinetics
Use of larger torso muscles
Arms as struts connecting paddle to torso
Avoidance of positions that contribute to shoulder injury or dislocations

Strokes

Forward Sweep
(anticipatory and reactive techniques)
Reverse Sweep
Stern Draw
Side Draw
Forward
Back
T (Eskimo) Rescue

Optional at instructors' discretion:

Roll
High Brace
Low Brace
Bow Draw
Stationary Draw
Sculling Draw
Duffek and other draw variations

Maneuvers (Practiced on Flatwater)

Spins (onside and offside): boat pivots in place
Forward: boat moves in reasonably straight line
Reverse: boat moves in a reasonably straight line
Stopping: boat stops within a reasonable distance
Turns: boat turns in broad arc made while underway
Veering, Carving, and paddling the "inside circle"
Abeam: boat moves sideways without headway
Sideslips: boat moves sideways with headway

River Reading (* items REQUIRED)

- A. Fundamentals of River Currents
- *Characteristics of Current
Downstream and Upstream V's / Chutes
Eddies/ Eddy Lines
Waves/ Wave Holes
Inside and Outside Bends
 - Effects of Obstacles
*Ledges/ Horizon Lines
*Strainers & Sieves
Rocks/ Pillows
*Holes/ Hydraulics
- Other Hazards
Power of the Current / River Level
*Cold Water
*Dams/ Flow Diversion Structures/ Pipelines
Undercut Rocks / Ice
 - International Scale of River Difficulty



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(handout: American Whitewater Safety Code)

Whitewater Practice

- A. Ferries
- B. Eddy Turns
- C. Peelouts
 - 1. Wide (exit wide from eddy line)
 - 2. Shallow (exit close to eddy line)
- D. Sequences of Maneuvers
 - 1. C-turns (Peel out and eddy into same eddy)
 - 2. S-turns (Peel out one side and eddy into opposite side)
- E. Surfing (for Whitewater course only)

River Running

- A. Strategies in Running Rivers
 - 1. How to paddle in current
 - Spacing/ Avoid "tunnel vision"
 - 2. Scouting
 - From boat/ From shore
 - How to establish the "best" route/ "Plan "B"
 - 3. Portaging Hazards
- B. Group Organization on the River
 - 1. Group cohesiveness (lead, sweep boats, etc.)
 - 2. Universal River Signals System
 - Emergency Procedures

Rescue

- A. Principles of Rescue
 - 1. Priorities - People, Boats, Gear (REQUIRED)
 - 2. Responsibilities of Victim
 - 3. Responsibilities of Rescuers
- B. Types of Rescue
 - 1. Self-Rescue in moving current (REQUIRED)
 - body/boat positions
 - handling equipment
 - 2. Boat-Assisted Rescue
 - Tired Swimmer
 - Towing
 - 4. Bumping
 - 5. Shoreline Rescue - Extension Rescues
 - Use of Throw Bags/Ropes
 - Pinned Craft
- D. Introduce ACA River Rescue Course
- E. Need to take a First Aid and CPR course

Individual Development (REQUIRED)

Learning Judgment
Continue learning process from more experienced paddlers
Responsibility to support other paddlers (no peer pressure)
Group Equipment: extra paddle, rescue sling, drybags, maps, first aid kit and location, rescue gear
Guidebooks / Local Knowledge

Assessing Current Environmental Conditions
(including: Water, Weather, Time of Day, and Temperature, Limited Access: Canyons, Cliffs, Remote Area)
Assessing Personal and Group Dynamics (Skills, Equipment, Group Makeup, Mental Status, Logistics, group selection, leadership)

Wrap up (REQUIRED)

Emphasize the need for further instruction, practice and experience

- River Reading
- Hazard Recognition and Avoidance
- Boat Control

Managing, Reducing, Eliminating Risks
Need for First Aid, CPR, and rescue training
River Etiquette
Other Paddling options
Local paddling groups/clubs
ACA Membership forms
Participation cards
Evaluation of course

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